

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 24, 2021

1:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Mia Costello, Chair  
Senator Roger Holland, Vice Chair  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Joshua Revak

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners  
Bernard Gatewood - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Professional Counselors  
Sammie O'Neal - Eagle River

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board  
Nancy Shaw - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska Labor Relations Board  
Patty Burley - Bethel

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy  
Donald Vieira - Palmer

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

## **PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

## **WITNESS REGISTER**

BERNARD GATEWOOD, Appointee

Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners.

SAMMIE O'NEAL, Appointee

Board of Professional Counselors  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Eagle River, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Professional Counselors.

NANCY SHAW, Appointee

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

PATTY BURLEY, Appointee

Alaska Labor Relations Board  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)  
Soldotna, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Labor Relations Board.

DONALD VIEIRA, Appointee

Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy.

## **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:30:21 PM](#)

**CHAIR MIA COSTELLO** called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Present at the call to

order were Senators Gray-Jackson, Stevens, and Chair Costello. Senator Holland joined the committee soon thereafter.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)

Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners

Board of Professional Counselors

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board

Alaska Labor Relations Board

Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy

[1:31:02 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO announced the consideration of Governor Appointees for Boards and Commissions.

[1:31:42 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND joined the committee.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Bernard Gatewood to introduce himself, provide a brief background, and explain his interest in serving on the Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners.

[1:31:58 PM](#)

BERNARD GATEWOOD, Appointee, Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), Fairbanks, Alaska, stated that he has lived in Alaska for about 40 years and was the superintendent at the Fairbanks Youth Facility with the Division of Juvenile Justice when he retired from state service in 2015. Since then he has tried to give back through volunteer work. He recounted that he is a trustee on the board of the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Foundation and the chair of the Bright Futures Fairbanks Committee, which is a subsidiary of the school district.

MR. GATEWOOD stated that he holds a master's degree in counselling and a bachelor's degree in sociology. He related that he looks forward to serving on this board because his work in the juvenile justice system made him aware of how many young people need help with their psychological disorders and this board is part of the mental health continuum. He underscored the importance, particularly for youth, of having mental health providers in the state. This board plays a significant role in professional licensure and ensuring that these professionals are properly vetted and able to work as quickly as possible, he said.

CHAIR COSTELLO said she appreciated his background. She asked what main challenges he saw facing youth who came to the Fairbanks Youth Facility.

MR. GATEWOOD replied one of the primary issues was making sure the kids had a place to go once they left the facility. "You don't want to have a kid in a facility, locked up and allow them to become institutionalized and just get comfortable. You also don't want to lock kids up because they have mental health issues." He said some were able to go back to their families and sometimes there was a good program available, but too often, the resources were lacking to help these young people get the help they needed once they exited the facility.

[1:37:20 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND thanked him for his interest, concern and desire to stay involved.

[1:38:10 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO opened public testimony on the appointment of Bernard Gatewood to the Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners; finding none, she closed public testimony.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Sammie O'Neal to introduce himself, provide a brief background, and explain his interest in serving on the Board of Professional Counselors.

[1:38:49 PM](#)

SAMMIE O'NEAL, Appointee, Board of Professional Counselors, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), Eagle River, Alaska, stated that he had lived in Alaska for 15 years and was retired from the military. After retirement, he started working in the mental health field, primarily with at-risk youth. His interest in serving on this board is to become an advocate for licensed professional counselors and expand the profession statewide.

[1:41:05 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO opened public testimony on the appointment of Sammie O'Neil to the Board of Professional Counselors; finding none, she closed public testimony.

CHAIR COSTELLO expressed appreciation for his willingness to learn and serve the state in an important capacity.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Nancy Shaw to introduce herself, provide a brief background, and explain her interest in serving on the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board.

1:41:55 PM

NANCY SHAW, Appointee, Alaska Workers' Compensation Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that she was initially appointed to the board in 2017 to finish the term of someone who resigned. She related that she was the attorney for the Teamsters Union until 2016 and the work she has done on the board has dovetailed with that earlier work. She related that as a board member she has taken her turn in hearing and deciding disputes between workers and employers about the benefits due injured workers. In her capacity on the board, she is working with the enforcement arm of the Division of Workers' Compensation on protocols to address employers that have failed to purchase workers' compensation insurance. She said another pet topic relates to the services provided to help injured workers get back into the workforce. She said she also would like the board to take a fresh look at retraining and placing people who are unable to return to the jobs they held before they were injured. She said she has enjoyed this work and would like to be reappointed.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked how often the Workers' Compensation Board meets each year.

MS. SHAW replied the board meets four times a year as a group and holds many hearings throughout the year. Responding to a further question about meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic, she said the meetings are by both Zoom and telephone conferencing.

CHAIR COSTELLO thanked her for her service.

1:45:17 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO opened public testimony on the reappointment of Nancy Shaw to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board; finding none, she closed public testimony.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Patty Burley to introduce herself, provide a brief background, and explain her interest in serving on the Alaska Labor Relations Board.

1:45:50 PM

PATTY BURLEY, Appointee, Alaska Labor Relations Board, Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Soldotna, Alaska, stated that she came to Alaska in 2001 and found her

home in Bethel working for the tribal nonprofit. Later she moved to state and municipal work; there she learned that the union, the employer, and the employees all have a unique perspective and are critical to the workforce. She said she is interested in serving on this board because it is the neutral body to help the three sides of labor.

1:47:55 PM

CHAIR COSTELLO opened public testimony on the appointment of Patty Burley to the Alaska Labor Relations Board; finding none, she closed public testimony.

SENATOR HOLLAND commented that he came to Alaska for a three-year program and always found a reason to extend. He thanked her for being involved and wanting to be on the Alaska Labor Relations Board.

CHAIR COSTELLO asked Donald Vieira to introduce himself, provide a brief background, and explain his interest in serving on the Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy.

1:48:53 PM

DONALD VIEIRA, Appointee, Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED), Palmer, Alaska, stated that he has been serving on the board since last year, primarily on Zoom. He related that he retired from the military in 2005, became a CPA in 2014, and opened his own business in 2016. He said he has enjoyed serving on the board and looks forward to continuing if confirmed.

SENATOR STEVENS asked if the people who apply for certification as an accountant find the process clear and easy to understand.

MR. VIEIRA answered that he went through the process about 10 years ago and he found it very clear. Since then the board has streamlined the process further such that the regulations are just the bare bones of what is required. He opined that the large number of international applicants speaks to how open and clear the process is to follow. He added that several bills were going through the process in the House related to the administrative procedures.

CHAIR COSTELLO noted that his resume indicated that he implemented a paperless workflow and she asked if that was difficult.

MR. VIEIRA said the key to a paperless process is having a place to store the information that is available to those who need it and not available to those who don't.

[1:54:55 PM](#)

CHAIR COSTELLO opened public testimony on the appointment of Donald Vieira to the Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy; finding none, she closed public testimony.

[1:55:03 PM](#)

SENATOR HOLLAND stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Board of Psychologists & Psychological Associate Examiners  
Bernard Gatewood - Fairbanks

Board of Professional Counselors  
Sammie O'Neal -Eagle River

Alaska Workers' Compensation Board  
Nancy Shaw - Anchorage

Alaska Labor Relations Board  
Patty Burley - Bethel

Alaska State Board of Public Accountancy  
Donald Vieira - Palmer

Signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

[1:55:59 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Costello adjourned the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 1:55 p.m.